

**Silver Spring  
Transportation Management District  
Advisory Committee  
March 4, 2010**

Abbreviations Used Herein Include:

BRT = Bus Rapid Transit

CE = County Executive

CSS = Commuter Services Section

LDG = Lee Development Group

MCDOT = Mont. Co. Dept. of Transportation

SHA = State Highway Administration

TMD = Transportation Management District

WABA = Washington Area Bicyclist Assn.

**Item 1 & 2 –Introductons/Agenda Review/Minute Approval:** Members introduced themselves. December and January minutes were reviewed and approved.

**Item 3 – Chair’s Comments:** Co-Chairs **Samantha Mazo** and **Andrew Wexler** introduced **Councilmember Valerie Ervin**.

**Item 4 – Councilmember Q&A:** **Councilmember Ervin** reported that in the Executive’s proposed FY11 budget, the County employee layoffs will be the worst in Montgomery County Government’s history. The first projected number of layoffs reported was 900, then the amount was reduced to 500; however the official number is not yet known. She said the only thing Silver Spring can do is try to hold the line.

Reemberto Rodriguez, Director of the Silver Spring Regional Services Center, noted that Silver Spring is continuing to undergo significant growth. Conservatively he estimates there will be 20 – 40 percent more “feet on the street” in Silver Spring over the next several years – yet fewer resources in the public sector to manage the area.

In response to **Ms. Mazo’s** question about the budget submittal process, **Ms. Ervin** said the County Executive (CE) prepares and submits his fiscal year budget recommendations to the County Council, which then has until mid-May to vote on his recommendations. During the two month deliberation period between the CE budget submittal and the Council’s vote, the Council can either accept or change CE recommendations. This period also presents an opportunity for organizations like the Silver Spring TMD Advisory Committee to make recommendations to the Council.

**Ms. Ervin** said she has worked with **County Executive Leggett** on a number of fronts to improve pedestrian safety and access, and the County’s current pedestrian safety plan is the result. She sent letters to the County’s Department of Transportation (MCDOT) as a part of her safety initiative to improve Silver Spring high incident areas. Among the projects:

- Improvements at Carroll Avenue between Piney Branch Road and University Avenue in winter 2009, which involved narrowing of the roadway, increasing crosswalks and adding bump-outs around Rolling Terrace Elementary School.
- Sligo Avenue, between Fenton and Chicago, will be adding crosswalks and bump outs in 2010.
- Intersection widening at Colesville Road and Dale Drive, also in 2010. Dale Drive will be widened at Mrs. K’s Toll House, creating left, through and right turning lanes. There will also be signal reconstruction, a retaining wall and a sidewalk adjacent to Mrs. K’s.

- Improvements to Arliss Street in 2010, between Piney Branch and Garland, will include ADA ramps, planters, streetscaping, crosswalks, lighting improvements and wider sidewalks.
- In summer 2010 traffic calming on Dale Drive between Wayne and Colesville will include parking restrictions, crosswalk improvements, bump-outs and intersection improvements.
- Sidewalks added:
  - Dale Drive between Hartford and Mansfield
  - Franklin Avenue between Colesville and University
  - Dale Drive between Colesville and Georgia
  -

**Ms. Ervin** said the sidewalk additions were the result of a letter she sent to the Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy & Environment (T&E) Committee in an effort to streamline the County's sidewalk construction process. This week the County Council approved a bill (Bill 3-10) to this effect. Sidewalk construction is a major, and sometimes controversial, issue in some residential areas; the bill addresses those communities that support sidewalk construction in their neighborhoods. **Richard Romer**, Policy Analyst for **Councilmember Ervin**, added that the bill eliminates the normal wait period of two to nine months if residents sign a petition for construction; if there is controversy regarding sidewalk issue, then the project would go through the normal construction process.

**Sgt. Tom Harmon** asked if photo speed camera funding is used to fund pedestrian safety initiatives. **Ms. Ervin** said yes, but the funding amount was small due to the \$10 million revenue loss that depleted the funds. **Mr. Romer** said in response to **Sgt. Harmon's** comments about difficulty in directing funds for certain projects, that a new Maryland State law passed last October requires an executive body to authorize each new location that funding can be used.

**Ms. Ervin** reported that the Capital Improvements Program includes the first phase of the Metropolitan Branch Trail construction, which will start in March 2010. The biggest obstacle to trail construction is crossing Georgia Avenue. Working with the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), a solution has been developed, which will be implemented during the first phase of construction.

**Ms. Ervin** stated that the Council will not support further cuts to Ride On bus service because it is the only means of transportation for some County residents.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Street traffic circle preliminary design construction has been completed with traffic light installation on the Maryland side. The Falkland Chase redevelopment construction will cause traffic problems, and **Ms. Ervin** is working with DC **Ward 4 Councilmember Muriel Bowser** to smooth traffic flow into the area.

**Ms. Ervin** noted the many State roads that transverse the Silver Spring area and said that communicating with the State Highway Administration (SHA) on pedestrian and traffic calming needs is a high priority but has been a challenge. She said it is imperative that a strategy be developed for working with the State and County on pedestrian safety on the major roads that traverse the Silver Spring TMD.

**Ms. Brecher**, on behalf of the Committee, thanked **Ms. Ervin** for her role in maintaining the TMD Advisory Committee when there was a proposal to disband it.

**Sgt. Harmon** said there appears to be some improvement with SHA's responsiveness to pedestrian safety issues of the TMD. The new director for SHA-District 3, **Bryan Young**, seems to be more receptive. The general areas of disagreement between SHA and the TMD's pedestrian safety mission center on SHA's mission of maintaining adequate traffic flow.

**Ms. Ervin** stated there is a need for the Governor to acknowledge Montgomery County's pedestrian safety issues because, with the new development projects, the county will increasingly face new safety challenges.

**Mr. Wexler** said that a recent meeting of the Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee, which had an SHA representative in attendance, was a promising start. He said in the past when requests and meeting announcements were made to SHA, no one would show up.

Mr. Wexler added that the Pedestrian Safety Audit recommendations from 2007 happen to coincide with SHA's plans for intersection improvements on Georgia Avenue from Colesville to Sligo, which prompted both agencies to start communicating with each other.

**Ms. Mazo** asked **Ms. Ervin** if she had any insight about how the District of Columbia handles adverse weather conditions, such as snow removal, compared to Silver Spring. **Ms. Brecher** said that the County did as good a job as they could in spite of the lack of resources allocated for snow removal. **Ms. Ervin** commented that the County snow removal funds are based on 12 inches of snow; however, twice that amount fell this winter and the latest estimate for the storms was \$25 million, much of which was the cost for bringing in snow removal equipment from other states. She suggested the Committee invite MCDOT to give a presentation on their snow removal operation. **Ms. Ervin** said the County's operation must remove snow from about 4,800 miles of roadway and employ dump trucks to deposit the snow at a remote location. **Everton Latty** said that there is information regarding snow removal on MCDOT's website.

**Ms. Brecher** said that plowed snow was sometimes deposited on the sidewalks, forcing pedestrians to walk in the streets. She said pedestrian safety considerations should be a focus when removing the snow. **Mr. Wexler** added that there should be outreach to businesses and residents regarding snow removal. **Terrie O'Steen** said that the Commuter Services Section (CSS) sends out snow removal information to businesses every winter advising employers of snow removal laws.

**Mr. Furgol** asked the status of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Initiative. **Ms. Ervin** reported that the initiative is gaining momentum and that \$500,000 has been allocated to fund the BRT study. Provision for BRT is included in the White Flint Master Plan and study of the master plan for the New Hampshire Avenue/White Oak area has been moved up in priority, because of FDA's location there. BRT could potentially provide an alternative transit option for the 12,000 FDA employees who only have 6,000 spaces provided for parking.

**Ms. Mazo** said that because the Fare Share and Super Fare Share programs have been suspended, leaving businesses to cover the full amount of transit cost for employees, she is afraid that people will return to driving because it is cheaper. **Ms. Ervin** took note of **Ms. Mazo's** comments and said she would look at the FY11 budget proposal.

**Item 5 – Presentation, Fillmore Music Hall:** **Bruce Lee**, President of Lee Development Group (LDG), headquartered in Silver Spring, gave a presentation on the Fillmore Music Hall development project.

The Fillmore project, originally the Birchmere, was initiated by the Montgomery County Dept. of Economic Development and is supported by **County Executive Ike Leggett**. Upon its expected completion in September 2011, the venue will house Live Nation as its tenant. Ground breaking will begin October 2010. Music venues typically schedule acts at least one year ahead, which puts LDG on a tight completion schedule.

Live Nation chose downtown Silver Spring location due to its proximity to DC, and because of the 11,000 parking spaces provided in the surrounding garages.

**Mr. Lee** said the design will retain the façade of the old JC Penny building, built in 1948. The parking lot behind the future Fillmore site is divided by a property line owned by LDG and **Richard Cohen**. **Mr. Cohen** has development plans for a 170,000 sq. ft. office building, and LDG has plans to develop an office building as well. Both developments will share parking lot access. Also sharing the parking area will be a hotel and an alley, which comes off of Georgia Avenue; the alleyway will serve as a loading area for the Fillmore and other buildings. Considerable time was spent working out the details of parking space sharing while at the same time providing for the future development projects.

**Edward Papazian**, Kimley-Horn and Associates, discussed vehicle access, stating that there will be separate access for the hotel and office buildings. The hotel's access will be on Fenton Street into the parking garage and on Georgia Avenue for the office buildings.

**Mr. Lee** said that the garbage dumpsters and grease containers that are presently in the alley area will be moved to a contained area. All pedestrian access will be at the front of the Fillmore.

**Ms. Ervin** asked about the availability of parking spaces once the office buildings are built. **Mr. Lee** said the office space is being built to County Code, which requires 476 parking spaces. In reference to **Ms. Brecher's** question about using County parking facilities provided by the Parking Lot District, **Mr. Lee** said for leasing purposes parking is a major consideration in attracting businesses seeking commercial space.

**Mr. Lee** said the Site Plan will be filed April 12<sup>th</sup>, and the hearing with Park and Planning is planned for July. He hopes the Site Plan approval and permits will be in place in time for the October ground breaking. The Site Plan includes the Fillmore, office building and hotel. Phase 1 of the plan is the Fillmore.

**Devon Perkins** from Hickok Cole Architects explained the layout of the buildings. The hotel will be nine stories high sitting on three stories of parking space. The Fillmore front entrance will house the ticket area. Eighty to ninety percent of ticket sales for Live Nation are purchased online and venue managers try to bring patrons into the theater promptly. The Fillmore's standing capacity is 1,045 on the main floor and 700 in the upper level; the seated capacity is 700 on the main floor and 300-350 on the upper level. The building has two stairways leading to the upper level on opposite sides of the lobby and an elevator. The building also houses an artist performance area and Live Nation offices.

**Mr. Lee** said Live Nation anticipates 30-40 'sit down' events and about 200 total performances per year. Live Nation is required to provide a certain number of performances under the lease with Montgomery County. The Fillmore will bring 100 jobs to the Silver Spring area. **Mr. Lee** said he hopes Fillmore's popularity will attract a profitable hotel to create VIP opportunities. The Fillmore project is a team effort; LDG meets every Friday with representatives from Montgomery County's Department of General Services, Park & Planning and the Department of Permitting Services.

**Mr. Lee** said that the Fillmore will have limited food service in an effort to have patrons eat in the area restaurants. The public record is open until the final vote in July. In response to **Ms. Mazo's** questions about a Gazette article in which traffic concerns were raised by residents, his team plans to meet with them to explain the traffic flow.

**Mr. Wexler** raised concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety when the Fillmore opens and asked how the process will be managed. **Mr. Lee** said Live Nation specializes in managing traffic/pedestrian flow.

He also said there will not be a mass exodus of people leaving when performances end; there are other activities which will engage the patrons such as visiting area restaurants. The parking garages are dispersed around the Fillmore, which will prevent a stream of people going in one direction and the acts will be timed to coordinate with Metro.

**Ms. Brecher** asked if there were figures of the number of people attending Fillmore events coming by car vs. Metro. Mr. Lee said about a third of the people will be coming before events start, which is between 6-7 pm, with some patrons already in Silver Spring. Figures show that about 50 percent will be coming by car, but that most will likely have more than one person per vehicle.

Due to budgetary constraints, Metro is planning to close the North Silver Spring entrance in FY11. **Mr. Wexler** asked if LDG notified Metro about the Fillmore project and the importance of keeping the entrance open. **Mr. Lee** said that since this is a recent development, talks with Metro have been preliminary. He suggested that the TMD could also write a letter to Metro to assist in keeping the entrance open.

**Ms. Mazo** asked if Live Nation would supplement funding for Van Go and whether they would support the Red Shirts Clean and Safe program through funding. **Mr. Lee** said that was under discussion; however the project is only in the beginning stages and things would be coordinated later.

**Ms. Brecher** mentioned a bike sharing initiative as a means of travel to the Fillmore and suggested adding it to the development plan. **Ms. Ervin** said she is interested in bringing bike sharing to locations in Montgomery County.

**Mr. Lee** requested that the TMD write letters to Park & Planning to support the Fillmore project and to Metro as well. He will send staff an email with the project plan number to distribute to Committee members.

Meeting adjourned at 10 am  
Next meeting date: April 8, 2010

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet  
March 4, 2010**

<b>Voting Members (12)</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Chamber Members (3)</b>			
Martin Atkinson	M&T Bank	X	
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online	X	
Samantha Mazo / Co-chair	Linowes and Blocher LLP	X	
<b>Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)</b>			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman	North & West Sector Plan Area		X
Andrew Wexler / Co-chair	CBD Resident	X	
<b>Employers less than 50 employees (3)</b>			
Rukiyat Gilbert	Southern Management Co.		X
Everton Latty	iDeal Decisions, Inc.	X	
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc. of N. America	X	
<b>Employers with 50 or more employees (3)</b>			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems	X	
Vacant			
<b>Non-Voting Members (4)</b>			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Christine McGrew	M-NCPPC		X
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police	X	
<b>Staff</b>			
Terrie O'Steen	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Nakengi Byrd	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
<b>Guests</b>			
Valerie Ervin	Montgomery County Council	X	
Shahriar Etemadi	M-NCPPC	X	
Michael Hickok	Hickok Cole Architects	X	
Bruce Lee	Lee Development Group	X	
Edward Papazian	Kimley-Horn and Associates	X	
Devon Perkins	Hickok Cole Architects	X	
Reemberto Rodriquez	SS Regional Center	X	
Richard Romer	Councilmember Ervin's Office	X	
Mel Tull	SS Regional Center	X	